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AIRFORCE FOR HQ USAF/ASX AND ASXP
DTRA FOR OP-OS OP-OSA AND DIRECTOR
NSC FOR LOOK
DIA FOR LEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2019
TAGS: KACT MARR PARM PREL RS US START
SUBJECT: START FOLLOW-ON NEGOTIATIONS, GENEVA (SFO-GVA-VI):
(U) AD HOC GROUP MEETING, OCTOBER 29, 2009

REF: A. GENEVA 0976 (SFO-GVA-VI-037)
¶B. MOSCOW 2600 (SFO-MOS-002)

Classified By: A/S Rose E. Gottemoeller, United States START Negotiator. Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d).

¶1. (U) This is SFO-GVA-VI-038.

¶2. (U) Meeting Date: October 29, 2009

Time: 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
Place: U.S. Mission, Geneva

SUMMARY

¶3. (S) At the second Ad Hoc Group meeting chaired by Secretary of Defense Representative Dr. Warner and Russian Deputy Head of Delegation Col Ilin, discussion focused on the application of the two sides' approaches to counting rules for various scenarios. Col Zaitsev of the Russian side presented a detailed critique of U.S. counting rules. Discussion ensued, with the U.S. side explaining the application of its counting rules logic to varying situations and the Russian side contending that its approach was simpler and more appropriate. The discussion focused in particular on contingencies relating to exhibitions of SSGNs, SSBNs in overhaul, removal of ICBMs and SLBMs for maintenance or similar purposes, and the counting rules and procedures for, and inspections of, the nuclear armaments for heavy bombers. Mr. Elliott presented the U.S. position on counting rules for heavy bombers and suggested a new approach to the storage of

deployed and non-deployed nuclear armaments for heavy bombers.

¶4. (S) SUBJECT SUMMARY: Time is Short and Discussions of the Package Proposal; SSGNs and Irreversibility; The Russian View on Counting Rules; Discussion of "considered to contain" and Non-deployed Status for ICBMs and SLBMs; U.S. Concept for Treatment of Heavy Bombers; and, Next Time - Mobiles.

TIME IS SHORT AND DISCUSSIONS
ON THE U.S. PACKAGE PROPOSAL

¶5. (S) Warner began the meeting by describing the U.S. Delegation's recognition of the very difficult challenges the two Parties face in trying to conclude an agreement by December 5, 2009. He then briefly touched on the package proposal laid out in the preceding plenary session (REF A). The package, he reaffirmed, was composed of specific provisions on some issues in its first three sections and, in the fourth section, indications of general direction, especially with regard to the issue of constraints on mobile launchers of ICBMs, telemetry and the treaty verification regime. He pointed out that even if the major issues addressed in the latest U.S. proposal were resolved, a massive amount of detailed work remained on developing a text for the treaty as well as the Tier II protocol and Tier III supporting documents/annexes.

¶6. (S) Warner restated the two broad objectives set for the Ad Hoc Group. The first was to gain improved understanding

of the respective sides' positions and concerns. The second was to develope "concrete proposed solutions." Dr. Warner emphasized the need for the group to concentrate also on this second mission to develop specific proposals for resolving crucial issues.

¶7. (S) Ilin agreed with Warner's point regarding the need to intensify efforts toward completion of the treaty, but said that the Russian side had not had adequate time to prepare for this meeting. Regarding the package proposal, the Russian side had found some of the provisions familiar, but others were "revelations." Ilin noted that the package proposal had been presented in two parts, with one part rigid and the other more flexible. He contended, however, that both sides needed to be flexible on all issues to allow for compromise. In light of this, the Russian side would review the package proposal, compare it with previous proposals, and search for draft solutions. He emphasized that the search for such solutions could not take place only in the Ad Hoc Group, but should also incorporate the working groups, especially with respect to the Tier II and Tier III documents.

¶8. (S) Ilin announced that the Russian side would deliver a presentation on counting rules as a response to Warner's presentation in Moscow two weeks earlier. The Russian side had decided to give it in the Ad Hoc Group rather than the plenary session because some of the information involved was sensitive.

¶9. (S) Warner, referring to the package proposal, clarified that, while the three sections on ceilings, conventionally-armed ICBMs and SLBMs, and the offense/defense relationship were precisely drawn, they all represented movement from initial U.S. positions and reflected the American side's search for compromise in light of expressed Russian positions. Even the proposed general direction components of the package also incorporated the search for mutually-acceptable positions. That said, Warner underlined the fact that the three sections were an "interconnected" set of proposed compromise solutions.

SSGNS AND IRREVERSIBILITY

¶10. (S) Gen Venevtsev asked for clarification regarding the

specific issue of SSGNs. In light of the U.S. proposal to exhibit each converted SSGN once, what, he asked, was the suggested U.S. verification regime for ensuring such submarines are not reconverted to carry and launch nuclear-armed SLBMs. Warner, noting that he needed to stay within his guidance, responded that each of the four SSGNs would be exhibited in order to demonstrate that each had been converted in such a way that it could not be reconverted back to a SSBN without "major, extensive" work in a shipyard. The fuller specifics of this matter would, Warner added, best be discussed in the Conversion or Elimination Working Group chaired by Elliott and Col Ryzhkov. Venevtsev countered that, despite U.S. claims of "irreversibility," he recalled earlier U.S. statements that, with sufficient money and time, any launcher could be re-converted. U.S. SSGNs would have to be in shipyards in any case, therefore, the issue of reversibility was still topical. Warner, noting that the Russian point had validity, responded that the United States

did not claim that its conversion process was irreversible, but only that reconversion would take substantial work that would have to be done in a shipyard. He also repeated that review of this matter would best be done in the Conversion or Elimination Working Group context

¶11. (S) Ilin stated that the Ad Hoc Group should be able to address all levels of issues without taboos. Regarding the package proposal, he stated that the Russian side would need it in written form in order to study it carefully. Warner and Ambassador Ries responded that the United States was working with the U.S. Embassy in Moscow to make the document available as quickly as possible.

THE RUSSIAN VIEW
ON COUNTING RULES

¶12. (S) Ilin then introduced Zaitsev and asked him to deliver a Russian presentation on counting rules. Zaitsev began by noting that, though the Russian side was impressed by the U.S. package proposal, the numbers and inspections involved would still be controlled by the basic counting rules. Zaitsev stated that his presentation served as a response to Warner's "very interesting" presentation delivered in Moscow earlier in the month (REF B).

¶13. (S) Zaitsev first addressed the issue of overall counting rules, noting that the U.S. position was to shift to a "hybrid" formula in order to develop a more realistic picture regarding strategic offensive arms (SOA). The Russian side shared the view that the inclusion of "phantom" SOAs substantially distorted the overall SOA picture. Yet, he asked, rhetorically, had the United States managed to solve properly this serious flaw with its hybrid approach to counting; he believed not.

¶14. (S) Zaitsev offered an example. On many occasions, the United States had emphasized that SSBNs in overhaul would not be counted in the deployed SOA category. Yet, the draft U.S. treaty stated that if a deployed SLBM is removed from its launcher and no other missile is installed, and the SLBM were located anywhere where non-deployed SLBMs are allowed to be, then the removed SLBM would still be considered to be contained in the launcher--in other words, deployed. Similarly, the SLBM tube would continue to be considered a deployed launcher. So, under this logic, the SLBM launchers on an SSBN incapable of performing its functions for a long period of time would still remain accountable under the U.S.-proposed treaty. Indeed, Warner had expressed an idea that had created additional ambiguity when he had stated that launchers on SSBNs in extended overhaul would be considered as non-deployed. This raised some questions: What procedures would be used to count such SSBNs and their launchers? Would launchers on such SSBNs be "considered to contain" missiles even if their SLBMs were located far away at another facility? Would such a picture accurately reflect the real SOA situation?

¶15. (S) The Russian position, in contrast, was aimed at a real count of SOA and verified limitations on them with a real relationship established between missiles and launchers. Under the Russian logic, ICBMs and SLBMs would be considered deployed only when actually installed in a launcher. Here the Russian side followed the U.S. logic regarding deployed warheads on ICBMs and SLBMs. Therefore, launchers containing missiles would be considered deployed launchers, while launchers not containing missiles would not be considered to be deployed. Such a counting system would be clear and would reflect the real combat capabilities of the SOAs of the two sides at each point in time. Conversely, the U.S. approach used the "considered to contain" approach, which would mean that, even if a missile is removed from its launcher, it is still counted as deployed. Thus, even if a missile is not in its launcher, not equipped with warheads, and is disassembled in stages, it would still be considered deployed. From the Russian point of view, this would not reflect reality.

¶16. (S) Regarding the U.S. point that the Russian approach regarding when strategic missiles are deployed as opposed to non-deployed would necessitate notifications of changes in the numbers of ICBMs and SLBMs deployed, the Russian side did not see any such technical or organizational problems. If a missile were to be loaded into a non-deployed launcher, then a notification would be submitted regarding an increase in deployed SOA. And, if a deployed missile were to be removed from its launcher, this would also require a notification. But, he added, this is not a typical situation. Elliott interjected; pointing out that this is indeed a common situation, at least for the U.S. side. Zaitsev noted that the procedures for these notifications would be provided for in an annex to the Notifications Protocol.

¶17. (S) Zaitsev turned to the proposed U.S. limit of 80 for non-deployed mobile launchers of ICBMs, stating that the Russian side had not yet heard the rationale for the number and querying why such a limit should exist only for the Russian side. It was not clear, he asserted, why no restrictions were included for non-deployed launchers on the U.S. side, especially for SLBMs. The Russian position was that limits on non-deployed launchers should apply equally to ICBMs and SLBMs, and that each Party should determine what various types of systems it requires in deployed and non-deployed status. The Russian side fully agreed with the U.S. side that each Party should enjoy flexibility regarding force composition and structure. The limits on deployed and non-deployed launchers should be equal for both sides, and the Russian-proposed third limit on launchers protected against possible future nuclear weapons uploading by a Party.

¶18. (S) Turning to the heavy bomber issue, Zaitsev stated the Russian view that if a heavy bomber actually carried warheads on board then the warheads would be considered deployed. If it did not, then the warheads would be non-deployed. The Russian side conceded, he said, that existing practices would mean that no warheads would be counted in this category, but he pointed out that the U.S. side saw no serious difficulties with the situation in which non-deployed ICBMs and SLBMs could be rapidly uploaded with warheads stored nearby. The logic outlined by Warner, he argued, produced a distorted portrayal of heavy bomber capabilities. As a fallback, the Russian side would be willing to use the START-type rules for heavy bombers and count each heavy bomber with the maximum number of warheads with which it was tested. But this would not, of course, reflect reality. Alternatively, the Russian side could agree to count each heavy bomber for each side as equipped with one warhead. This would be a simpler method.

¶19. (S) Zaitsev then challenged the U.S. position calling for on-site inspections in the weapons storage areas (WSAs) associated with heavy bomber air bases. In the Russian view,

this U.S. approach was problematic and could contribute to mistrust and suspicion. According to the Russian understanding of the U.S. proposal, the inspected Party would provide to inspectors the number of warheads stored in each WSA that could be counted for heavy bombers at a given base. This would raise more questions, such as: Had all WSAs at the base been declared? Had all the warheads been shown? Why were some warheads at the facility counted and others at the same facility not counted? What criteria would be used for identifying armaments subject to treaty limitations? What would serve as the containers for warheads and for ALCMs?

¶20. (S) Zaitsev said that the Russian side had been surprised at Secretary Clinton's recent remark that the invitation of Russian inspectors to very sensitive sites would be a unique event. Focusing on this category of sensitive sites, Zaitsev noted that, when START inspections first began, Russian inspectors had visited the naval submarine base at Bangor, WA, where they were granted access to weapons storage bunkers there because the door size was such as to render them inspectable. Of course, the U.S. side then made the doorways smaller and thus was able to block further inspections. But the point was that the inspections in the bunkers had actually raised more questions than they had settled. Why could the inspectors enter some storage facilities and not others? Was something being hidden? A similar situation could arise with respect to the WSAs for heavy bombers. Thus, an illusion of counting warheads could be created which would not reflect the real situation. The Russian side was, therefore, asking the U.S. side to provide a more detailed explanation of its proposed counting and verification regime for heavy bomber armaments.

DISCUSSION OF "CONSIDERED
TO CONTAIN" AND NON-DEPLOYED
STATUS FOR ICMS AND SLBMS

¶21. (S) After Warner thanked Zaitsev for his presentation, Ilin noted that, though it had been some time since Warner's presentation in Moscow, the Russian side had yet to see a formal paper reflecting changes in the U.S. position. Warner responded by characterizing Zaitsev's presentation as focusing on three key issues: the "considered to contain" approach regarding accountability of ICBMs and SLBMs and its impact on SSBNs in extended overhaul as well as general questions regarding the removal of ballistic missiles from launchers, especially for maintenance; limits on mobile launchers of ICBMs, especially the limit of 80 on non-deployed mobile ICBM launchers; counting rules for heavy bomber armaments and the mode of inspection for WSAs at heavy bomber bases.

¶22. (S) Regarding the first issue, Warner explained that the "considered to contain" rule was designed largely to provide an effective basis for managing routine maintenance of ballistic missiles at their bases. Article III, paragraph 3,

subparagraph B of the U.S.-proposed treaty clearly and consistently provided for this process for ICBMs. Under its provisions, if an ICBM is removed from a silo or mobile launcher, not replaced, and kept on the base--usually for purposes of maintenance--then the launcher would still be considered to contain/hold a deployed missile. Warner conceded that the provisions for SLBMs in Article III, paragraph 3, subparagraph C of the U.S.-proposed treaty did not, however, track with the treatment of ICBMs in subparagraph B. The United States now preferred to keep the treatment of SLBMs the same as for ICBMs, as the U.S. objective was not to invite complexity during periods of routine maintenance. It was the U.S. understanding that the Russian logic sought the same goal.

¶23. (S) Regarding submarines in extended overhaul, Warner pointed to Adm Kuznetsov's description in the earlier meeting in Moscow of a similar process for Russian submarines.

Kuznetsov had agreed that the launchers of submarines undergoing extended overhaul in a shipyard would be considered non-deployed. Warner suggested removing contradictory elements of the Parties' treaty drafts in order to ensure launchers on such submarines would not be considered to contain deployed SLBMs and, thus, would be considered non-deployed SLBM launchers and no deployed warheads would be attributed to the absent SLBMs.

¶24. (S) Ryzhkov queried how silo launchers, from which ICBMs had been removed and transported from the base, would be treated. Elliott noted that Ryzhkov had touched on a dilemma not anticipated under START. Elliott stated that the U.S. intent was to eliminate Peacekeeper and Minuteman III silos, and that the United States has a long-term desire to use those missiles as space launch vehicles. In order to achieve this goal required ensuring these silos would not be counted as deployed. He emphasized that the Russian side appeared to share a similar objective. Ryzhkov responded that the problem could arise under other circumstances not solely linked to the Peacekeeper issues. Pushed by Warner to specify such contingencies, Ryzhkov pointed to a scenario in which a missile had been removed from its silo and base and moved to a remote plant or facility, leaving no replacement missile at the base. In the Russian view, such a silo should become non-deployed, and should be reflected as such in the Memorandum of Understanding.

¶25. (S) Warner acknowledged that the Russian side had begun to establish the logic for a category of non-deployed launchers for silos that were empty but had not yet been eliminated. The United States would take this approach into consideration, he said. Ryzhkov asserted that the Russian approach was simpler and more understandable, tracking accurately the lifecycle of a weapon and leaving nothing to the imagination. Warner agreed that it would be useful to have a sub-category for missiles removed for maintenance and stored at a base such that it would not be considered non-deployed. Perhaps a time limit could be stipulated before such a missile and its associated launcher would be considered non-deployed. Warner described a visit to Bangor during which a submarine was undergoing repair work and therefore had had its missiles temporarily removed. The "considered to contain" rule was useful for such situations in order to prevent the missiles and their associated launchers from lapsing into non-deployed status. More

generally, the Parties could work through the time and distance thresholds for such a formulation.

¶26. (S) Ryzhkov challenged this approach, contending that the Russian approach reflected the real loadout at a given time. Missiles removed and under repair are of no importance at any given moment, he argued and, therefore, should not be counted as deployed SOA. He urged the United States to consider the Russian approach and emphasized that its impact would not actually be significant.

¶27. (S) Elliott noted differences between U.S. and Russian maintenance procedures and missile characteristics. The U.S. practice has been to pull and replace missiles more often than Russia. Warner's approach sought to minimize the notification and change-of-status requirements associated with such changes while acknowledging that longer-term removal of missiles necessitates a change to non-deployed status. The U.S. treatment of heavy bombers was an extension of this logic, he explained.

¶28. (S) Picking up on this point, Warner turned the discussion to heavy bombers, suggesting that the Parties discuss mobile launchers of ICBMs at the next session of the Group.

U.S. CONCEPT FOR
TREATMENT OF HEAVY BOMBERS

¶29. (S) Elliott began his presentation by conceding that the U.S. position on counting rules for heavy bombers was indeed not as simple as the Russian position. But, he quipped, simpler is not always better. The United States regarded its proposal as better because it took into account the belief that the unknown is a greater fear than the known. Therefore, the United States was willing to agree to open its bomber armament WSAs to show clearly what they contain and how the United States operates. This proposal was connected to addressing the very important issue of eventually reducing the large stockpiles of legacy bomber weapons. Therefore, the United States believed that the Parties must address not only deployed, but also non-deployed, warheads. Conversely, under the Russian proposal, the Parties would be permitted to retain hundreds of cruise missiles stored on or very near heavy bomber bases. Although the Russian side was technically correct that both sides' heavy bombers are not loaded day-to-day and, thus, heavy bombers should count as possessing zero deployed nuclear warheads, that approach ignored the reality that the standard procedure for heavy bombers required loading them only shortly before takeoff. He continued that, although a portion of U.S. bombers had been loaded with nuclear weapons on day-to-day alert for 30 years, that situation was an aberration, not the norm. The majority of bombers throughout that period were not loaded with nuclear weapons. The U.S. position was therefore to separate the large number of non-deployed air-launched nuclear-armed cruise missiles from heavy bombers and to place them in a central storage facility that would not provide for operational readiness. The operational nuclear-armed ALCMs would be stored in WSAs at the heavy bomber bases.

¶30. (S) Anticipating the question of why the United States should even retain such ALCMs in such a posture, Elliott stated that the Parties are loathe to dismantle such systems in which they have invested so much. In addition, practical considerations require retaining a stockpile, including four cruise missiles for each year's quota of flight tests, as well as providing contingency for breakage, aging, and retirement.

¶31. (S) The broader issues the Parties would have to address, Elliott said, were that distance equates to time and time to transparency. The first step would be to declare where non-deployed ALCMs are located, as the Parties had already done with regard to non-deployed ICBMs and SLBMs that are stored at declared facilities and are subject to inspection.

¶32. (S) Elliott emphasized that this was a conceptual point and that he had reached the limits of the authorization from the U.S. Government. But, the point was well worth considering. He also clarified gravity bombs would be treated differently from ALCMs because, while cruise missile warheads can easily be separated from the missiles themselves, the warheads are an integral part of gravity bombs. Furthermore, gravity bombs are returned to nuclear weapons production facilities, to which the United States was not prepared to provide access.

NEXT TIME - MOBILES

¶33. (S) Elliott noted that the U.S. side had more questions regarding Zaitsev's discussion of heavy bombers, mostly relating to the problems of inspections at WSAs. He stated that the U.S. side would raise these issues at the next meeting of the Group, noting that there was no doubt that the heavy bomber counting rules problem was the most challenging issue not covered by the package proposal. The next session would also cover limits, constraints, verification, and activities associated with mobile launchers of ICBMs. The U.S. side was looking at the minimum requirements necessary for such SOA.

¶34. (S) Ilin restated the Russian position that mobile ICBMs

should not be treated as a separate category, but agreed that the problem should be discussed at the next meeting. He also proposed that more detailed planning for the agenda should be done in advance of the next meeting. Warner agreed, proposing that the group meet early during the next negotiating session and that it focus on tough issues that cut across the purview of the various working groups. He emphasized that the schedule would not permit much time for philosophical debate and, therefore, the group should focus on developing practical solutions acceptable to both sides. Ilin agreed regarding the time pressure and added no objections to Warner's proposal.

¶35. (U) Documents exchanged. None.

¶36. (U) Participants:

U.S.

Dr. Warner

Mr. Elliott
Amb Ries
Mr. Siemon
Mr. Trout
Mr. Colby
Dr. Hopkins (Int)

RUSSIA

Col Ilin
Mr. Koshelev
Gen Orlov
Gen Poznihir
Col Ryzhkov
Gen Venevtsev
Col Zaitsev
Mr. Gayduk (Int)

¶37. (U) Ries sends.
GRIFFITHS